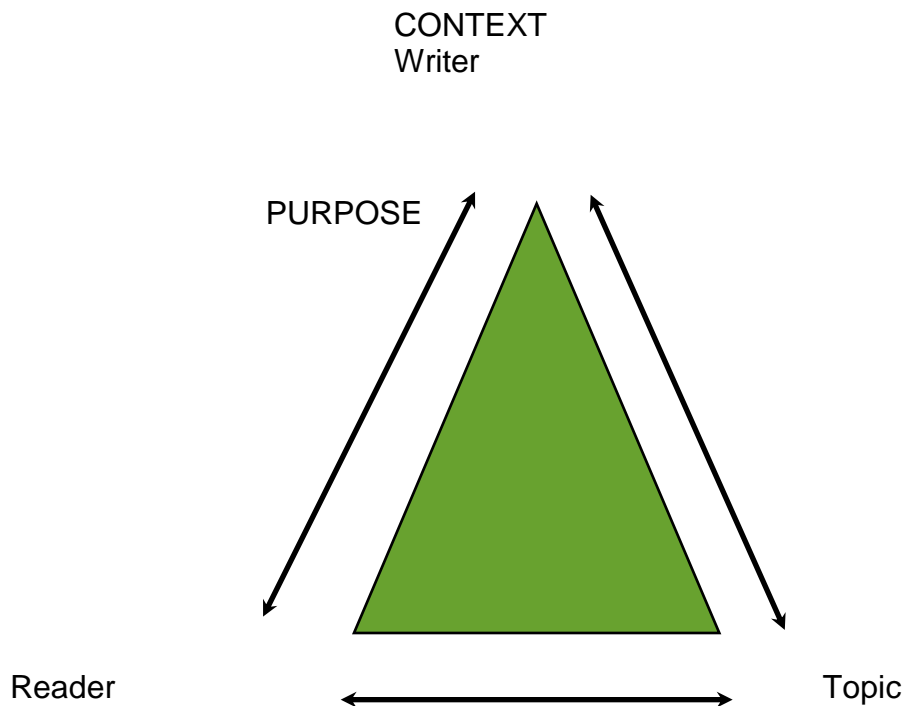


TEXT-DEPENDENT WRITING

By the end of the session, participants will have:

1. discussed the role of rhetoric in their teaching;
2. used a poem to connect meanings across texts;
3. developed a standards-based, text-based writing prompt that considers topic, audience, purpose

Description: “The way we read and structure language is always *rhetorical* - always dependent on how speakers or writers, subjects, audiences, contexts and purposes interact to make communication work.” (2014, Jolliffe & Roskelly)



Utah Core Standard (Reading Informational Text, Grade Band 11-12) Determine an author's **point of view** or **purpose** in a text which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how the style and content contribute to the persuasiveness, or beauty of the text.

Learning Task 1: With a partner construct, in a sentence, what the poet is claiming?

SHEEP - Kenneth Brewer

The Virgin River vanishes
in canyon rock
leaving tear stains
for the mountain sheep[
who graze on stone,
who know the earth is steep
in every direction, who know
geometry is merely
the shape of stone,
empty space,
memory of hooves.

We want to ask
"How can you live here?"
But we drive fast
past their answer,
our attention always
ahead of us.

Learning Task 2: With a partner find evidence in the following two texts, that show HOW Brewer's viewpoint can be supported.

TEXT ONE: Last Child in the Woods: Saving our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder

WRITER: **Richard Louv**, recipient of the 2008 Audubon Medal, is author of seven books. The chairman of the Children and Nature Network (www.cnaturenet.org), he is also honorary co-chair of the National Forum on Children and Nature. In this landmark work, Last Child in the Woods, Louv brought together cutting-edge studies that pointed to direct exposure to nature as essential for a child's healthy physical and emotional development.

Excerpt from Chapter 5 - A Life of the Senses: Nature vs. the Know-It-All-State-of-Mind

...as human beings we need direct, natural experiences; we require fully activated senses in order to feel fully alive. 21st century Western culture accepts the view that because of omnipresent technology we are awash in data. But in this information age, vital information is missing. Nature is about smelling, hearing, tasting, seeing below the "transparent mucous-paper in which the world like a bon-

bon is wrapped so carefully that we can never get at it,” as D.H. Lawrence put it, in a relatively obscure but extraordinary description of his own awakening to nature’s sensory gift. Lawrence described his awakening in Taos, New Mexico, as an antidote to the “know-it-all-state-of-mind,” that poor substitute for wisdom and wonder:

“the more we know, superficially, the less we penetrate, vertically. It’s all very well skimming across the surface of the ocean and saying you know all about the sea...WE are mistaken. Underneath is everything we don’t know and are afraid of knowing.”

Some of us adults recognize the know-it-all-state-of-mind in ourselves, sometimes at unlikely moments.

TEXT TWO: Eating Stone: Imagination and the Loss of the Wild (2006)

WRITER: **Ellen Meloy**, a native of the West, has lived in California, Montana, and Utah. Meloy spent most of her life in wild, remote places; at the time of her sudden death in November 2004 she and her husband were living in southern Utah. In her honor, her friends and family founded The Ellen Meloy Fund for Desert Writers, which supports work that reflects the spirit and passions of her work. Here previous book, *The Anthropology of Turquoise*, was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize and won the Utah Book Award. <http://www.ellenmeloy.com/index.html>

Homo sapiens have left themselves few places and scant ways to witness other species in their own world, an estrangement that leaves us hungry and lonely. In this famished state, it is no wonder that when we do finally encounter wild animals, we are quite surprised by the sheer truth of them.

The life of a bighorn sheep is a life spent on cliffs. True to their species, these animals loved bleak country. They were nervous, gregarious, hilarious, agile, gorgeous, faithful to place to the point of disaster. They came with personalities: the bullies, the head bangers, the celibate pacifist ram, the barren ewes, the lambs perched atop sheer pinnacles of rock, leaping straight up in the air like toast popping out of a toaster. They were often elusive and spectral. To see them was a blessing.

QUESTIONS FOR RHETORICAL ANALYSIS:

1. What is the writer’s purpose? How do you know? In a sentence what is the author claiming (please use textual evidence for your reasoning)?
2. Who is the audience? How do you know from the text?
3. Using evidence from the text, how does the writer’s word choice convey ideas? What are the ideas in the text?
4. Using textual evidence, how does the writer create an account of experience through imagery? Does this descriptive account elicit or evoke any emotions from the reader (you)?
5. How could you better understand what influences the writer’s viewpoint? Why is this important from a rhetorical perspective?

Text-dependent writing actually depends on the standard you are using to support students in their writing.

Using the most recent newsletter from the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, as well as other articles from local papers and websites, create a purposeful and authentic **writing prompt** that would provide an opportunity for students to:

1. read literary nature non-fiction as well as poetry by Utah poets for the purpose of
 - analyzing how the style and content contribute to the persuasiveness, or beauty of the text.
2. develop a descriptive essay or editorial or letter to their representatives or poem that -uses imagery to communicate a clear purpose, context, and viewpoint for a particular audience about the subject: The Natural World around Us.